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[*on the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/55/578)*]

55/144. Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands

A

GENERAL

The General Assembly,

Having considered the questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands, hereinafter referred to as "the Territories",

Having examined the relevant chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,[1]

Recalling its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and all resolutions and decisions of the United Nations relating to those Territories, including, in particular, the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the individual Territories covered by the present resolution,

Recognizing that the specific characteristics and the sentiments of the peoples of the Territories require flexible, practical and innovative approaches to the options of self-determination, without any prejudice to territorial size, geographical location, size of population or natural resources,

Recalling its resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960, containing the principles that should guide Member States in determining whether or not an obligation exists to transmit the information called for under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations,

[1] A/55/23 (Part II), chap. X. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23*.

Expressing its concern that even forty years after the adoption of the Declaration there still remain a number of Non-Self-Governing Territories,

Acknowledging the significant achievements by the international community towards the eradication of colonialism in accordance with the Declaration, and conscious of the importance of continuing effective implementation of the Declaration, taking into account the target set by the United Nations to eradicate colonialism by the year 2000 and the plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism,[2]

Noting the positive constitutional developments in some Non-Self-Governing Territories about which the Special Committee has received information, while also acknowledging the need for recognition to be given to expressions of self-determination by the peoples of the Territories consistent with practice under the Charter,

Recognizing that in the decolonization process there is no alternative to the principle of self-determination as enunciated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and other resolutions,

Welcoming the stated position of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland that it continues to take seriously its obligations under the Charter to develop self-government in the dependent Territories and, in cooperation with the locally elected Governments, to ensure that their constitutional frameworks continue to meet the wishes of the people, and the emphasis that it is ultimately for the peoples of the Territories to decide their future status,

Welcoming also the stated position of the Government of the United States of America that it supports fully the principles of decolonization and takes seriously its obligations under the Charter to promote to the utmost the well-being of the inhabitants of the Territories under United States administration,

Aware of the special circumstances of the geographical location and economic conditions of each Territory, and bearing in mind the necessity of promoting economic stability and diversifying and strengthening further the economies of the respective Territories as a matter of priority,

Conscious of the particular vulnerability of the Territories to natural disasters and environmental degradation and, in this connection, bearing in mind Agenda 21,[3] the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation, containing the Principles, the Strategy and the Plan of Action,[4] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[5] and other relevant world conferences,

Aware of the usefulness both to the Territories and to the Special Committee of the participation of appointed and elected representatives of the Territories in the work of the Special Committee,

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[2] See A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1, annex.

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[4] A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[5] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

Convinced that the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of the Territories should continue to guide the development of their future political status and that referendums, free and fair elections and other forms of popular consultation play an important role in ascertaining the wishes and aspirations of the people,

Convinced also that any negotiations to determine the status of a Territory must not be held without the active involvement and participation of the people of that Territory,

Recognizing that all available options for self-determination of the Territories are valid as long as they are in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned and in conformity with the clearly defined principles contained in resolutions 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and other resolutions of the General Assembly,

Mindful that United Nations visiting missions provide an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the Territories, and considering that the possibility of sending further visiting missions to the Territories at an appropriate time and in consultation with the administering Powers should be kept under review,

Noting that the Special Committee held a Pacific regional seminar at Majuro from 16 to 18 May 2000 to hear the views of the representatives of the Territories, as well as Governments and organizations in the region, in order to review the political, economic and social conditions in the Territories,

Mindful that, in order for the Special Committee to enhance its understanding of the political status of the peoples of the Territories and to fulfil its mandate effectively, it is important for it to be apprised by the administering Powers and to receive information from other appropriate sources, including the representatives of the Territories, concerning the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of the Territories,

Mindful also in this connection that the Special Committee regards the holding of regional seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions and at Headquarters and other venues, with the active participation of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as a helpful means to fulfil its mandate, while recognizing the need for reviewing the role of those seminars in the context of a United Nations programme for ascertaining the political status of the Territories,

Mindful further that some Territories have not had any United Nations visiting mission for a long period of time and that no such visiting missions have been sent to some of the Territories,

Noting with appreciation the contribution to the development of some Territories by specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, and regional institutions such as the Caribbean Development Bank,

Noting that some territorial Governments have made efforts towards achieving the highest standards of financial supervision, but that some others have been listed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as having met the criteria of the Organisation defining a tax haven, and noting that some territorial Governments have expressed concern about insufficient dialogue between them and the Organisation,

Noting also the ongoing efforts of the Special Committee in carrying out a critical review of its work with the aim of making appropriate and constructive

recommendations and decisions to attain its objectives in accordance with its mandate,

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the peoples of the Territories to self-determination, including, if they so wish, independence, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

2. *Reaffirms also* that it is ultimately for the peoples of the Territories themselves to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection calls upon the administering Powers, in cooperation with the territorial Governments, to facilitate programmes of political education in the Territories in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV);

3. *Requests* the administering Powers to transmit to the Secretary-General information called for under Article 73 *e* of the Charter and other updated information and reports, including reports on the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of the Territories regarding their future political status as expressed in fair and free referendums and other forms of popular consultation, as well as the results of any informed and democratic processes consistent with practice under the Charter that indicate the clear and freely expressed wish of the people to change the existing status of the Territories;

4. *Stresses* the importance for the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to be apprised of the views and wishes of the peoples of the Territories and to enhance its understanding of their conditions;

5. *Reaffirms* that United Nations visiting missions to the Territories at an appropriate time and in consultation with the administering Powers are an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the Territories, and requests the administering Powers and the elected representatives of the peoples of the Territories to assist the Special Committee in this regard;

6. *Reaffirms also* the responsibility of the administering Powers under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and to preserve the cultural identity of the Territories, and recommends that priority continue to be given, in consultation with the territorial Governments concerned, to the strengthening and diversification of their respective economies;

7. *Requests* the administering Powers, in consultation with the peoples of the Territories, to take all necessary measures to protect and conserve the environment of the Territories under their administration against any environmental degradation, and requests the specialized agencies concerned to continue to monitor environmental conditions in those Territories;

8. *Calls upon* the administering Powers, in cooperation with the respective territorial Governments, to continue to take all necessary measures to counter problems related to drug trafficking, money-laundering and other offences;

9. *Notes with concern* that the plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism cannot be concluded by the year 2000;

10. *Calls upon* the administering Powers to enter into constructive dialogue with the Special Committee before the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly to develop a framework for the implementation of the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for the period beyond 2000;

11. *Notes* the particular circumstances that prevail in the Territories concerned, and encourages the political evolution in them towards self-determination;

12. *Urges* Member States to contribute to the efforts of the United Nations to usher in the twenty-first century in a world free of colonialism, and calls upon them to continue to give their full support to the Special Committee in its endeavours towards that noble goal;

13. *Invites* the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to initiate or to continue to take all necessary measures to accelerate progress in the social and economic life of the Territories, and calls for closer cooperation between the Special Committee and the Economic and Social Council in the furtherance of the provision of assistance to the Territories;

14. *Takes note* of statements made by the elected representatives of the Territories concerned emphasizing their willingness to cooperate with all international efforts aimed at preventing abuse of the international financial system and to promote regulatory environments with highly selective licensing procedures, robust supervisory practices and well-established anti-money-laundering regimes;

15. *Calls* for an enhanced and constructive dialogue between the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the concerned territorial Governments with a view to bringing about the changes needed to meet the highest standards of transparency and information exchange in order to facilitate the removal of those Non-Self-Governing Territories from the list of jurisdictions classified as tax havens, and requests the administering Power to assist those Territories in resolving this matter;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly on the implementation of resolutions concerning decolonization adopted since the declaration of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism;

17. *Requests* the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of the small Territories and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session with recommendations on appropriate ways to assist the peoples of the Territories in exercising their right to self-determination.

83rd plenary meeting
8 December 2000

B

INDIVIDUAL TERRITORIES

The General Assembly,

Referring to resolution A above,

I. *American Samoa*

Taking note of the report by the administering Power that most American Samoan leaders express satisfaction with the island's present relationship with the United States of America,

Taking note with interest of the statement made and the information on the political and economic situation in American Samoa provided by the Governor of American Samoa to the Pacific regional seminar held at Nadi, Fiji, from 16 to 18 June 1998,[6]

Noting that the territorial Government continues to have significant financial, budgetary and internal control problems and that the Territory's deficit and financial condition are compounded by the high demand for government services from the rapidly growing population, a limited economic and tax base and recent natural disasters,

Noting also that the Territory, similar to isolated communities with limited funds, continues to experience a lack of adequate medical and other infrastructural facilities,

Aware of the efforts of the territorial Government to control and reduce expenditures while continuing its programme of expanding and diversifying the local economy,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Calls upon* the administering Power to continue to assist the territorial Government in the economic and social development of the Territory, including measures to rebuild financial management capabilities and strengthen other functions of the territorial Government;

3. *Welcomes* the invitation extended by the Governor of American Samoa to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to send a visiting mission to the Territory;

II. *Anguilla*

Conscious of the commitment of both the Government of Anguilla and the administering Power to a new and closer policy of dialogue and partnership through the Strategic Country Programme 2000-2003,

[6] See A/AC.109/2121, para. 28.

Aware of the efforts of the Government of Anguilla to continue to develop the Territory as a viable and well-regulated offshore financial centre for investors by enacting modern company and trust laws, as well as partnership and insurance legislation, and computerizing the company registry system,

Noting the need for continued cooperation between the administering Power and the territorial Government in tackling the problems of drug trafficking and money-laundering,

Noting also that general elections were held on 3 March 2000, resulting in a new coalition government in the House of Assembly,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Calls upon* the administering Power and all States, organizations and United Nations agencies to continue to assist the Territory in its social and economic development;

3. *Welcomes* the country cooperation framework of the United Nations Development Programme for the period 1997-1999 currently being implemented following consultations with the territorial Government and key development partners in the United Nations system and the donor community;

4. *Also welcomes* the assessment by the United Nations Development Programme that the Territory has made considerable progress in the domain of sustainable human development and in its sound management and preservation of the environment, which has been incorporated into the National Tourism Plan;

5. *Further welcomes* the assessment by the Caribbean Development Bank in its 1999 report on the Territory that, despite economic contraction in the first quarter, the economy rebounded to reach 6 per cent growth during 1999;

III. *Bermuda*

Noting the results of the independence referendum held on 16 August 1995, and conscious of the different viewpoints of the political parties of the Territory on the future status of the Territory,

Noting also the functioning of the democratic process and the smooth transition of government in November 1998,

Noting further the comments made by the administering Power in its recently published White Paper on Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories,[7]

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Calls upon* the administering Power to continue to work with the Territory for its socio-economic development;

[7] See A/AC.109/1999/1 and Corr.1, annex.

3. *Requests* the administering Power to elaborate, in consultation with the territorial Government, programmes specifically intended to alleviate the economic, social and environmental consequences of the closure of the military bases and installations of the United States of America in the Territory;

IV. *British Virgin Islands*

Noting the completion of a constitutional review in the Territory and the coming into force of the amended Constitution, and noting also the results of the general elections held on 17 May 1999,

Noting also the results of the constitutional review of 1993-1994, which made it clear that a prerequisite to independence must be a constitutionally expressed wish by the people as a result of a referendum,

Taking note of the statement made in 1995 by the Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands that the Territory was ready for constitutional and political advancement towards full internal self-government and that the administering Power should assist through the gradual transfer of power to elected territorial representatives,

Noting that the Territory is emerging as one of the world's leading offshore financial centres,

Noting also the need for continued cooperation between the administering Power and the territorial Government in countering drug trafficking and money-laundering,

Noting further that the Territory commemorated its annual British Virgin Islands-United States Virgin Islands Friendship Day on 27 May 2000 in official ceremonies in Tortola,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Requests* the administering Power, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and all financial institutions to continue to provide assistance to the Territory for socio-economic development and the development of human resources, bearing in mind the vulnerability of the Territory to external factors;

3. *Welcomes* the assessment by the Caribbean Development Bank in its 1999 report that the Territory enjoyed continued expansion of the financial services sector and tourism industries, and also welcomes the provision to the Territory of 21.1 million United States dollars in technical assistance loans by the Bank, including 19.9 million dollars to assist with the financing of the Beef Island Airport;

V. *Cayman Islands*

Noting the constitutional review of 1992-1993, according to which the population of the Cayman Islands expressed the sentiment that the existing relations with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland should be maintained and that the current status of the Territory should not be altered,

Aware that the Territory has one of the highest per capita incomes in the region, a stable political climate and virtually no unemployment,

Noting the actions taken by the territorial Government to implement its localization programme to promote increased participation by the local population in the decision-making process in the Cayman Islands,

Noting with concern the vulnerability of the Territory to drug trafficking, money-laundering and related activities,

Noting the measures taken by the authorities to deal with those problems,

Noting also that the Territory has emerged as one of the world's leading offshore financial centres,

Noting further the approval by the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly of the Territory's Vision 2008 Development Plan, which aims to promote development that is consistent with the aims and values of Caymanian society,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Requests* the administering Power, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to continue to provide the territorial Government with all required expertise to enable it to achieve its socio-economic aims;

3. *Calls upon* the administering Power and the territorial Government to continue to cooperate to counter problems related to money-laundering, smuggling of funds and other related crimes, as well as drug trafficking;

4. *Requests* the administering Power, in consultation with the territorial Government, to continue to facilitate the expansion of the current programme of securing employment for the local population, in particular at the decision-making level;

5. *Welcomes* the implementation of the country cooperation framework of the United Nations Development Programme for the Territory, which is designed to ascertain national development priorities and need for United Nations assistance;

VI. *Guam*

Recalling that, in the referendum held in 1987, the registered and eligible voters of Guam endorsed a draft Guam Commonwealth Act that would establish a new framework for relations between the Territory and the administering Power, providing for a greater measure of internal self-government for Guam and recognition of the right of the Chamorro people of Guam to self-determination for the Territory,

Recalling also its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and all resolutions and decisions of the United Nations relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories, in particular General Assembly resolutions 54/90 A and B of 6 December 1999,

Recalling further the requests by the elected representatives and non-governmental organizations of the Territory that Guam not be removed from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories with which the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is concerned, pending the self-determination of the Chamorro people and taking into account their legitimate rights and interests,

Aware that negotiations between the administering Power and the territorial Government on the draft Guam Commonwealth Act are no longer continuing and that Guam has established a process for a self-determination vote by the eligible Chamorro voters,

Cognizant that the administering Power continues to implement its programme of transferring surplus federal land to the Government of Guam,

Noting that the people of the Territory have called for reform in the programme of the administering Power with respect to the thorough, unconditional and expeditious transfer of land property to the people of Guam,

Conscious that immigration into Guam has resulted in the indigenous Chamorros becoming a minority in their homeland,

Aware of the potential for diversifying and developing the economy of Guam through commercial fishing and agriculture and other viable activities,

Noting the proposed closing and realigning of four United States Navy installations on Guam and the request for the establishment of a transition period to develop some of the closed facilities as commercial enterprises,

Recalling the dispatch in 1979 of a United Nations visiting mission to the Territory, and noting the recommendation of the 1996 Pacific regional seminar for sending a visiting mission to Guam,[8]

Noting with interest the statements made and the information on the political and economic situation in Guam provided by the representatives of the Territory to the Pacific regional seminar, held at Majuro from 16 to 18 May 2000,[9]

1. *Requests* the administering Power to work with Guam's Commission on Decolonization for the Implementation and Exercise of Chamorro Self-Determination with a view to facilitating the decolonization of Guam and to keep the Secretary-General informed of progress to that end;

2. *Calls upon* the administering Power to take into consideration the expressed will of the Chamorro people as supported by Guam voters in the referendum of 1987 and as provided for in Guam law, encourages the administering Power and the territorial Government of Guam to enter into negotiations on the matter, and requests the administering Power to inform the Secretary-General of progress to that end;

3. *Requests* the administering Power to continue to assist the elected territorial Government in achieving its political, economic and social goals;

[8] See A/AC.109/2058, para. 33 (20).

[9] A/55/23 (Part I), chap. II, annex, para. 27. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23.*

4. *Also requests* the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government, to continue to transfer land to the original landowners of the Territory;

5. *Further requests* the administering Power to continue to recognize and respect the political rights and the cultural and ethnic identity of the Chamorro people of Guam, and to take all necessary measures to respond to the concerns of the territorial Government with regard to the question of immigration;

6. *Requests* the administering Power to cooperate in establishing programmes specifically intended to promote the sustainable development of economic activities and enterprises, noting the special role of the Chamorro people in the development of Guam;

7. *Also requests* the administering Power to continue to support appropriate measures by the territorial Government aimed at promoting growth in commercial fishing and agricultural and other viable activities;

VII. *Montserrat*

Taking note with interest of the statements made and the information on the political and economic situation in Montserrat provided by the elected representatives of the Territory to the Caribbean regional seminar, held at Castries, from 25 to 27 May 1999,[10]

Taking note of the statement made by the Chief Minister of Montserrat on 22 May 1998 on the occasion of the observance of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights,[11]

Noting that the last visiting mission to the Territory was dispatched in 1982,

Noting also the functioning of a democratic process in Montserrat and that general elections were held in the Territory in November 1996,

Taking note of the reported statement of the Chief Minister that his preference was for independence within a political union with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and that self-reliance was more of a priority than independence,

Noting with concern the dire consequences of the eruptions of the Montsoufriere volcano, which led to the evacuation of three quarters of the population of the Territory to safe areas of the island and to areas outside the Territory, in particular Antigua and Barbuda and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and which continues to have a negative impact upon the economy of the island,

Noting the efforts of the administering Power and the territorial Government to meet the emergency situation caused by the volcanic eruptions, including the implementation of a wide range of contingency measures for both the private and the public sectors in Montserrat,

Noting also the coordinated response measures taken by the United Nations Development Programme and the assistance of the United Nations disaster management team,

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[10] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23), annex II, para. 30.

[11] See A/AC.109/SR.1486.

Noting with concern that a number of the inhabitants of the Territory continue to live in shelters because of volcanic activity,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Calls upon* the administering Power, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as regional and other organizations, to continue to provide urgent emergency assistance to the Territory in alleviating the consequences of the volcanic eruptions;

3. *Welcomes* the support of the Caribbean Community in the construction of housing in the safe zone to alleviate a shortage caused by the environmental and human crisis of the eruptions of the Montsoufriere volcano, as well as the material and financial support of the international community to help alleviate the suffering caused by the crisis;

VIII. *Pitcairn*

Taking into account the unique nature of Pitcairn in terms of population and area,

Expressing its satisfaction with the continued economic and social advancement of the Territory, as well as with the improvement of its communications with the outside world and its management plan to address conservation issues,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Also requests* the administering Power to continue its assistance for the improvement of the economic, social, educational and other conditions of the population of the Territory;

3. *Calls upon* the administering Power to continue its discussions with the representatives of Pitcairn on how best to support their economic security;

IX. *St. Helena*

Taking into account the unique character of St. Helena, its population and its natural resources,

Noting that the Commission of Inquiry into the Constitution appointed at the request of the Legislative Council of St. Helena reported its recommendations in March 1999, and that the Legislative Council is currently considering the recommendations,

Also noting the administering Power's commitment to consider carefully suggestions for specific proposals for constitutional change from the territorial Governments, as stated in its White Paper on Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories,[7]

Welcoming the participation of an expert from the Legislative Council of St. Helena for the first time in the Pacific regional seminar, held at Majuro from 16 to 18 May 2000,[12]

Aware of the establishment by the territorial Government of the Development Agency in 1995 to encourage private sector commercial development on the island,

Also aware of the efforts of the administering Power and the territorial authorities to improve the socio-economic conditions of the population of St. Helena, in particular in the spheres of food production, continuing high unemployment and limited transport and communications, and calls for continuing negotiations to allow access to Ascension Island by civilian charter flights,

Noting with concern the problem of unemployment on the island, and noting the joint action of the administering Power and the territorial Government to deal with it,

1. *Notes* that the administering Power has taken note of various statements made by members of the Legislative Council of St. Helena about the Constitution and is prepared to discuss them further with the people of St. Helena;

2. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

3. *Requests* the administering Power and relevant regional and international organizations to continue to support the efforts of the territorial Government to address the socio-economic development challenges, including high unemployment and the problems of limited transport and communications;

X. *Turks and Caicos Islands*

Taking note with interest of the statements made and the information on the political and economic situation in the Turks and Caicos Islands provided by the Cabinet Minister as well as a member of the legislature from the opposition of the Territory to the Caribbean regional seminar, held at St. John's, from 21 to 23 May 1997,[13]

Noting that the People's Democratic Movement was elected to power in the Legislative Council elections held in March 1999,

Also noting the efforts by the territorial Government to strengthen financial management in the public sector, including efforts to increase revenue,

Noting with concern the vulnerability of the Territory to drug trafficking and related activities, as well as its problems caused by illegal immigration,

Noting the need for continued cooperation between the administering Power and the territorial Government in countering drug trafficking and money-laundering,

Welcoming the assessment by the Caribbean Development Bank in its 1999 report that the economic performance of the Territory remained strong, with an

[12] A/55/23 (Part I), chap. II, annex, para. 39. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23*.

[13] See A/AC.109/2089, para. 29.

increase in gross domestic product estimated at 8.7 per cent, reflecting strong growth in the tourism and construction sectors,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Invites* the administering Power to take fully into account the wishes and interests of the Government and the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands in the governance of the Territory;

3. *Calls upon* the administering Power and the relevant regional and international organizations to continue to provide assistance for the improvement of the economic, social, educational and other conditions of the population of the Territory;

4. *Calls upon* the administering Power and the territorial Government to continue to cooperate in countering problems related to money-laundering, smuggling of funds and other related crimes, as well as drug trafficking;

5. *Welcomes* the assessment by the Caribbean Development Bank in its 1999 report that the economy continued to expand with considerable output and low inflation;

6. *Also welcomes* the first country cooperation framework approved by the United Nations Development Programme for the period 1998-2002, which should, inter alia, assist in the development of a national integrated development plan that will put into place procedures for determining the national development priorities over ten years, with the focus of attention on health, population, education, tourism and economic and social development;

7. *Takes note* of the statement made by the elected Chief Minister in May 2000 that the Territory was in the process of developing diversified resource mobilization strategies, including joint ventures with the private sector, and that external assistance would be welcomed as part of that process;

XI. *United States Virgin Islands*

Taking note with interest of the statements made and the information provided by the representative of the Governor of the Territory to the Pacific regional seminar, held at Majuro from 16 to 18 May 2000,[14]

Noting that although 80.4 per cent of the 27.5 per cent of the electorate that voted in the referendum on the political status of the Territory held on 11 October 1993 supported the existing territorial status arrangements with the administering Power, the law required the participation of 50 per cent of the registered voters for the results to be declared legally binding and therefore the status was left undecided,

Noting also the continuing interest of the territorial Government in seeking associate membership in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and observer status in the Caribbean Community and the Association of Caribbean States,

[14] A/55/23 (Part I), chap. II, annex, para. 31. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23.*

Noting further the necessity of further diversifying the economy of the Territory,

Noting the efforts of the territorial Government to promote the Territory as an offshore financial services centre,

Noting with satisfaction the interest of the Territory in joining the United Nations International Drug Control Programme as a full participant,

Recalling the dispatch in 1977 of a United Nations visiting mission to the Territory,

Noting that the Territory commemorated its annual British Virgin Islands-United States Virgin Islands Friendship Day on 27 May 2000 in official ceremonies in Tortola,

1. *Requests* the administering Power, bearing in mind the views of the people of the Territory ascertained through a democratic process, to keep the Secretary-General informed of the wishes and aspirations of the people regarding their future political status;

2. *Also requests* the administering Power to continue to assist the territorial Government in achieving its political, economic and social goals;

3. *Further requests* the administering Power to facilitate the participation of the Territory, as appropriate, in various organizations, in particular the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the Caribbean Community and the Association of Caribbean States;

4. *Expresses concern* that the Territory, which is already heavily indebted, had to borrow 21 million United States dollars from a commercial bank to carry out its year 2000 computer compliance programme, and calls for the United Nations year 2000 programme to be made available to the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

5. *Notes* that the general elections held in the Territory in November 1998 resulted in the orderly transfer of power;

6. *Expresses concern* that the territorial Government is facing severe fiscal problems, which has resulted in an accumulated debt of more than one billion dollars;

7. *Welcomes* the measures being taken by the newly elected territorial Government in addressing the crisis, including the adoption of a five-year operating and strategic financial plan, and calls upon the administering Power to provide every assistance required by the Territory to alleviate the fiscal crisis, including, inter alia, the provision of debt relief and loans;

8. *Notes* that the 1994 report of the United States Virgin Islands Commission on Status and Federal Relations concluded that, owing to the insufficient level of voter participation, the results of the 1993 referendum were declared legally null and void.

83rd plenary meeting
8 December 2000